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News Release

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Federal jury finds Native Mob gang members guilty of attempted murder, racketeering, and other charges

Twenty-one of twenty-five indicted gang members earlier pleaded guilty to RICO-related charges, while another pleaded guilty to murder

MINNEAPOLIS— Earlier today in federal court, a jury found three members of the Native Mob street gang guilty on a number of charges related to the gang's criminal activity. Following a nearly two-month trial, the jury found Wakinyon Wakan McArthur, age 34, guilty on six counts, including racketeering; William Earl Morris, age 25, guilty on four counts; and Anthony Francis Cree, age 26, guilty on six counts, including racketeering and attempted murder (see attached chart for specific charges). On July 19, 2012, the defendants were charged in a superseding indictment.

Following today's conviction, U.S. Attorney Todd Jones said, "The Native Mob has wreaked havoc on tribal and non-tribal communities across Minnesota and our region. Its members traffick in drugs and guns, using violence, intimidation, and in some instances, murder, against those who stand in their way. This case, brought against more than two dozen Native Mob members, including its leaders, exemplifies the broad reach and effectiveness of a federal RICO prosecution, which carries penalties of up to life in prison, in attacking violent criminal organizations. This investigation took several years and the cooperation of numerous

local, state, federal, and tribal law enforcement agencies. Their hard work has made our communities safer."

The Native Mob is a regional criminal gang that originated in Minneapolis in the early 1990s. Members routinely engage in drug trafficking, assault, robbery, and murder. Membership is estimated at 200, with new members, including juveniles, regularly recruited from communities with large, male, Native American populations. Association with the gang is often signified by wearing red and black clothing or sporting gang-related tattoos. According to the 2011 National Gang Threat Assessment, the Native Mob is one of the largest and most violent American Indian gangs in the U.S. and is most active in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

The evidence presented at trial proved that since at least the mid-1990s, the named defendants and others have conspired to conduct criminal activity through an "enterprise," namely, the Native Mob, in violation of the federal Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act ("RICO"). The primary objective of this "enterprise" is to preserve, protect, promote, and enhance the Native Mob's power, territory, and financial gains.

To that end, gang members distribute illegal drugs, from crack cocaine to ecstasy. They also provide monetary support to other members, including those incarcerated; share with one another police reports, victim statements, and other case discovery; hinder or obstruct officials from identifying or apprehending those wanted by the law; and intimidate witnesses to Native Mob crimes. Moreover, they maintain and circulate firearms for gang use and commit acts of violence, including murder, against individuals associated with rival gangs.

On December 21, 2012, Shaun Michael Martinez, age 35, pleaded guilty to shooting and killing fellow gang member Jeremee Kraskey. Martinez, also known as Tinez, pleaded guilty to one count of murder resulting from the use and carrying of a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence.

In his plea agreement, Martinez admitted that on February 26, 2011, he killed Kraskey to prevent him from offering law enforcement information about the Native Mob's criminal activities, which were the subject of a joint federal-state investigation. Martinez specifically admitted that on February 26, 2011, he drove Kraskey to a residence in the 3500 block of 14th Avenue South in Minneapolis, where he shot Kraskey three times. Martinez further admitted his use of a firearm occurred during and in relation to a conspiracy to violate federal racketeering laws.

According to the evidence presented at trial, the defendants committed numerous overt acts as evidence of their "criminal enterprise":

- Immediately after the death of Kraskey, McArthur and others held an "emergency" Native Mob council meeting to discuss, among other things, Kraskey's murder.
- On March 4, 2010, McArthur, Cree, and others attempted to kill a man by shooting him three times with a .40-caliber handgun, the attack being in retaliation for the man's supposed cooperation with law enforcement. At the time of the shooting, the man was holding his five-year-old daughter in his arms.

- On July 10, 2010, McArthur and others attended a meeting to discuss killing enemies of the Native Mob, the transportation of firearms from northern Minnesota to Minneapolis, the storage and location of gang firearms, drug trafficking, collecting money for incarcerated Native Mob members, and the identity of persons believed to be cooperating with law enforcement against the Native Mob.
- On March 7, 2010, in south Minneapolis, Native Mob members attempted to kill a Native Vice Lord gang member by shooting him in the neck.
- On August 24, 2010, McArthur ordered members of the Native Mob a drive-by shooting of a rival gang member's apartment in Bemidji.
- On March 28, 2011, McArthur ordered members of the Native Mob to conduct a home invasion in Cass Lake.

For their crimes, the defendants who were tried and convicted in this case face a potential maximum sentence of between 20 years and life in federal prison. Since the federal justice system does not have parole, prison terms will be served virtually in their entirety behind bars. United States District Court Judge John R. Tunheim will determine their sentences at a future hearing, yet to be scheduled. See the attached chart for a list of other defendants and charges.

In addition to the defendants in this case, a number of Native Mob members have been prosecuted in related cases: Kenny Roberts and Corey Benjamin were convicted in 2010 of being armed career criminals in possession of firearms; Gordon Reese was convicted in 2007 of assault, methamphetamine trafficking, and possession of firearms, and he is serving a 30-year sentence; Rueben Crowfeather was convicted in 2008 of drug trafficking and has served his sentence; and Alden Fairbanks has pleaded guilty to racketeering conspiracy charges and is awaiting sentencing.

This case was the result of a long-term, cross-jurisdictional investigation conducted by numerous local, state, federal, and tribal law enforcement officers dedicated to making Minnesota's streets and communities safer. These agencies include representatives from the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives; the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration; the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs; the FBI-funded Headwaters Safe Trails Task Force; the Paul Bunyan Drug Task Force; the Minnesota Department of Corrections; the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension; the Carlton County Sheriff's Office; the Mille Lacs Tribal Police Department; the Bemidji Police Department; and the Minneapolis Police Department. These investigators were assisted by those from—in alphabetical order—the Becker County Sheriff's Office, the Beltrami County Sheriff's Office, the Carlton County Attorney's Office, the Cass County Attorney's Office, the Cass County Sheriff's Office, the Crow Wing County Sheriff's Office, the Douglas County Sheriff's Office of Wisconsin, the Duluth Police Department, the Fond du Lac Tribal Police Department, the Fridley Police Department, the Itasca County Sheriff's Department, the Hennepin County Attorney's Office, the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, the Hubbard County Sheriff's Office, the Leech Lake Tribal Police Department, the LCO Reservation Police Department, the Lower Sioux Tribal Police Department, the Mahnommen County Sheriff's Office, the Minnesota State Patrol, the Mille Lacs County Attorney's Office, the Mille Lacs County Sheriff's Office, the New Brighton Police Department, the North Central Drug Task Force, the Prior Lake Police Department, the Red Lake Tribal Police Department, the Redwood County Sheriff's Office,

Richfield Police Department, the Sherburne County Sheriff's Office, the St. Paul Police Department, the U.S. Marshals Service, the Minneapolis Violent Offender Task Force, the Washington County Sheriff's Office, and the White Earth Tribal Police Department.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Andrew R. Winter and Steven L. Schleicher.

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